

In re Patent Application of:

CHAPMAN ET AL.

Serial No. 10/617,065

Filing Date: JULY 10, 2003

REMARKS

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the thorough examination of the present application. The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for withdrawing the Examiner's objection to the specification, and for removing the Spencer patent as a prior art reference.

The independent claims have been amended to more clearly define the present invention over the cited prior art references. The claim amendments are supported by FIG. 4 and the supporting description on page 10, line 29 through page 13, line 18 of the specification, for example. In addition, new dependent Claims 37-42 are being added, the subject matter of which is also supported by the specification. Dependent Claims 12, 24 and 36 have been amended for consistency.

FIG. 4 has been corrected to remove duplicate reference numbers. The specification has also been amended for consistency. The claim amendments and arguments supporting patentability of the claims are provided below.

I. The Amended Claims

The present invention, as recited in amended independent Claim 1, for example, is directed to a method for processing a public information release authorization (PIRA) request over an intranet. The method comprises accessing via the intranet a PIRA form comprising a plurality of fields to be filled-in, the plurality of fields including a date field indicating when public information is to be released, a title field indicating a title of the public information, an author

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field indicating an author of the public information, and an abstract field indicating at least a summary of the public information; and filling in the plurality of fields in the PIRA form. The PIRA form is submitted to at least one approver via e-mail with the email including a hyperlink to the PIRA form. The method further comprises transmitting comments for the PIRA form by the at least one approver via e-mail.

Independent Claim 13 is directed to an intranet for distributing a PIRA form, and has been amended similar to amended independent Claim 1.

Independent Claim 25 is directed to a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions, and has been amended similar to amended independent Claim 1.

II. The Claims are Patentability Distinct From Co-Pending Application 09/596,629

The Examiner has taken the position that the claims in co-pending application 09/596,629 are not patentability distinct from each other because the claims in the present application are directed towards the same process of disseminating information. The Examiner further states that even though the claims are directed to different types of information, the distinction is irrelevant because the technical details of the present invention are independent of the type of data being transmitted and the particular human sender and receivers of data.

The applicants submit that in view of the claim amendments, the claims are now patentability distinct from each other.

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III. The Claims are Patentable

The Examiner rejected independent Claims 1, 13 and 25 over the Ouchi patent in view of the Potash et al. patent. The Examiner cited Ouchi as disclosing a method for creating and submitting a form over the intranet, with the form being submitted by an author to at least one approver via e-mail with a hyperlink to the form; and transmitting comments on the form by the at least one approver via e-mail. As correctly noted by the Examiner, Ouchi fails to disclose that the form is a public information release form.

The Examiner cited Potash et al. as disclosing this feature of the claimed invention. In particular, the Examiner referenced the "employee confidentiality and invention agreement" line in FIG. 19. The Examiner broadly interpreted this agreement as being equivalent to a public information release form since the Applicants did not describe a public information release form in limiting detail in the claims.

As noted above, independent Claim 1, for example, has been amended to recite that the PIRA form comprises a plurality of fields to be filled-in, the plurality of fields including a date field indicating when public information is to be released, a title field indicating a title of the public information, an author field indicating an author of the public information, and an abstract field indicating at least a summary of the public information. The Applicants submit that the Potash et al. patent fails to disclose this level of detail. Consequently, an "employee confidentiality and invention agreement" cannot be

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compared as being equivalent to a PIRA form since they both serve different functions. As a result of the amended independent Claim 1, even if the prior art references were selectively combined as suggested by the Examiner, the claimed invention is still not produced.

Accordingly, it is submitted that amended independent Claim 1 is patentable over the Ouchi patent in view of the Potash et al. patent. Amended independent Claims 13 and 25 are similar to amended independent Claim 1. Therefore, it is submitted that these claims are also patentable over the Ouchi patent in view of the Potash et al. patent.

In view of the patentability of amended independent Claims 1, 13 and 25, it is submitted that the dependent claims, which include yet further distinguishing features of the invention are also patentable. These dependent claims need no further discussion herein.

IV. CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments to the claims and the arguments provided herein, it is submitted that all the claims are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is requested in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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